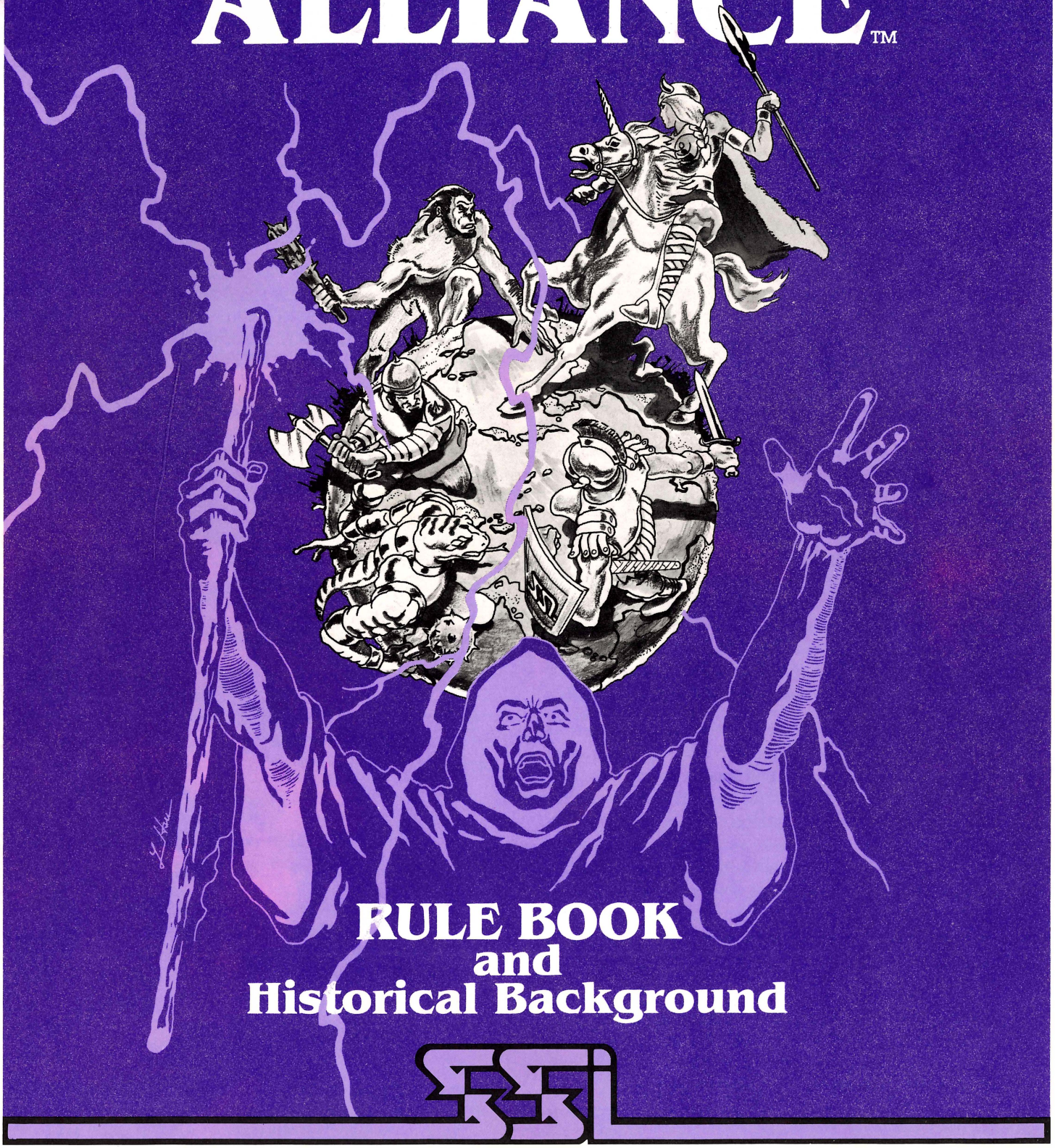
Chronicles of Osgorth

THE SHATTERED ALLIANCE™



RULE BOOK and Historical Background

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Shattered Alliance is a tactical level simulation of the First Battles of the planet of Osgorth (for a description of Osgorth, see the introduction and history also included). The game is designed so that two people can play simultaneously with the computer. The computer will also provide an intelligent solitaire player for interactive play.

1.1 MAP DISPLAYS

There are two maps which display the battlefield, strategic and tactical. The strategic map includes the entire battlefield; movement is regulated by a 20 by 20 hexagonal grid (hex sides are not drawn). On this map, only the unit type symbols are displayed. The tactical map includes a 7 by 9 hex portion of the strategic map, with both unit types and tribes displayed (hex sides ARE drawn). The player may select a particular portion of the strategic map to display as the tactical map.

1.2 VICTORY CONDITIONS

The game operates in this manner: both armies deploy and battle until one army's morale reaches zero. This army sounds the retreat and leaves the battlefield, thereby losing the battle.

1.3 STARTING A GAME (DOS 3.2 or DOS 3.3)

To begin a game; boot your game disc and the game will begin automatically, If you are using an Apple II with PASCAL, you must use your BASICS disc. If you are using an Apple III, you must first go into Apple II Emulation Mode.

1.4 SAVING A GAME

The computer will allow the player(s) to save the game in progress at any point. Simply press the "E" key and the computer will give appropriate instructions. If you choose to save the game, you will need a scratch disc to store the data. The scratch disc must be initialized for SSI use by following the instructions included in the program. Once the game is saved, you will be able to restart it from the point at which you left off.

1.5 PARTS INVENTORY

A) Game Box
B) Rule Book
C) 5¼" Game Disc
D) Two Command Cards
E) One Scenario Card
F) One Combat and Morale Data Card
G) One Player Introduction Card

1.6 THE RAPIDFIRE GAME SYSTEM:

The Shattered Alliance is the beginning of a revolution in computer game design. SSI's new real-time game system, RAPIDFIRE, brings you an interactive game which is versatile, yet easy to play. Let's look at the heart of RAPIDFIRE, the movement system.
Movement is an important part of any game system. RAPIDFIRE is a unique real-time movement system which is different from the standard systems.

In the standard system, the game would be divided into a number of game-turns. An individual unit would move each game-turn for a variable distance. In this case, a light cavalry unit might move 5 hexes per game-turn in clear terrain and 3 hexes in rough terrain.

With the SSI system, the game is divided into a number of time-points. Now, an individual unit will move a constant distance (one hex) at a variable interval. The light cavalry unit would take 3 time-points to move one hex in clear terrain and 6 time-points to move a hex in rough terrain. We believe RAPIDFIRE simulates movement more realistically than the usual wargame.

Combat and morale are also essential parts of any game system. With RAPIDFIRE only two units fight at any time. The computer calculates the attack strength for both units and determines the losses each suffers. The attack strength takes into account the armor and armament of the opposing unit, the tactical situation of the attacker and a random factor. This is all computed instantly and the losses are taken from each side. If a small number of casualties are inflicted, then the battle is generally a draw; if, however, moderate to large losses are incurred, then a winner and loser are declared. Here, morale becomes a factor in the game.

Victories and losses affect both the army's and the individual units' morale. Battle losses will lower morale and will eventually cause losing units to rout. This will lower army morale and result in the quick demise of the army.

1.7 THE CHRONICLES OF OSGORTH

This game is an introduction to the turbulent history of Osgorth. Located in the Andromeda Galaxy, the planet Osgorth shares with Earth the same primal forests, tall mountain ranges, blue glassy lakes, even its life-giving atmosphere. Here the similarity ends, for Osgorth has bred other sentient races such as Centaurs, Elves, the pig-like Hozgits and subhuman Zorgs. Since most of these unique races band together in tribes, all that these diverse peoples have in common are loyalty to their own kind and stubborness.

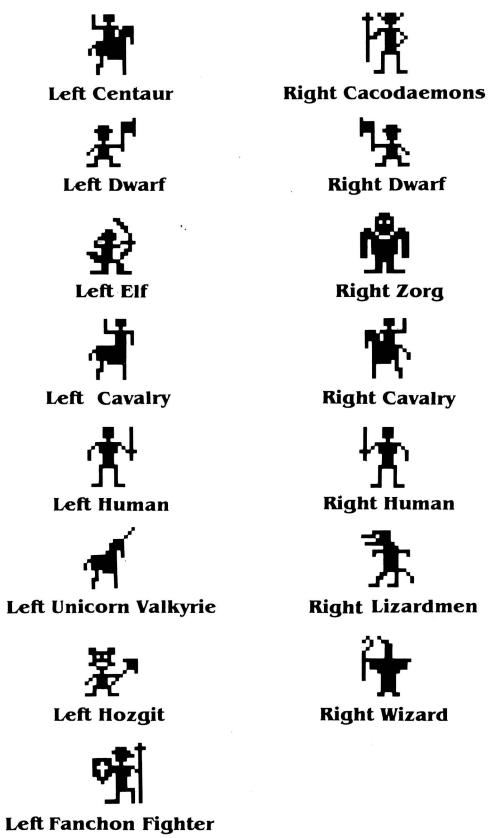
In ancient times, Osgorth was divided into two kingdoms: Northwold, ruled by King Noran, and the Far Reaches, ruled by King Gavin. Between them they held the allegiance of all the different tribes. Then came the interstellar interference of the Moonriders and their Wizard, Ormolu who brought the touch of Magic to Osgorth which became the bane of both kingdoms and led to their downfall. Osgorth has now become a land of scattered tribes and fallen realms each vying for power.

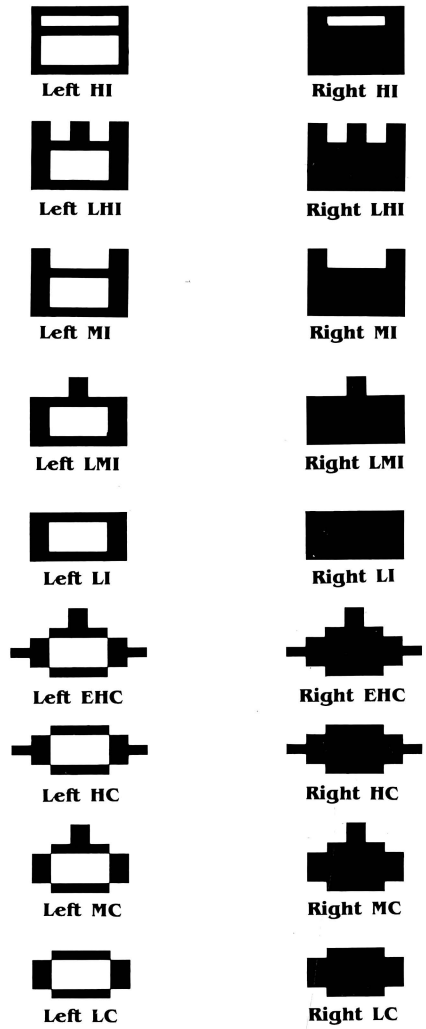
Come . . . recreate the First Battles of Osgorth which lead to *The Shattered Alliance.*

2.0 GAME DISPLAY

2.1 UNIT SYMBOLS:

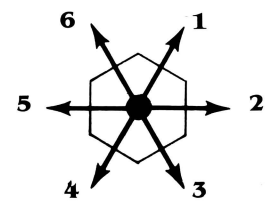
The symbols displayed below represent the Osgorthian unit types and tribes.





2.2 SCREEN DISPLAY:

NOTE: The letters below explain the screen commands shown on the game's video display. This information is always displayed on both tactical and strategic maps; here, the information is displayed on the strategic map.



A — represents the movement direction guide.

When a unit is displayed and ready to move, the numbers of the direction guide represent the direction in which that unit may move. Press the appropriate key (1-6) to move the displayed unit in the desired direction.

101

B — represents the time-point counter.

This measure the elapsed game time and regulates movement during the game.

12 9

C — represents both armies' morale level. When one army's morale level reaches zero it has lost (see *Morale*).

HC B

D — represents the unit's classification.

The first group of characters represent the unit type (HC = Heavy Cavalry); the second group represents how well this unit is trained (training class). A is the best, D the worst;

Sh Jav

E — represents the unit's armor and armament.

If the first group of characters is "Sh", then the unit is equipped with a shield; Any other characters represent various weapons such as pikes, long spears, javelins, bows, two-handed axes and the like. Fire combat weapons are displayed after melee weapons.

1000 0

F — represents the unit's strength and morale.

The first number is the unit's present strength in number of men. Each unit begins with a set complement of troops, then casualties are subtracted. The second number is the number of consecutive battles lost (if any) — this directly determines whether a unit will rout; (see *Morale*);

10.5

G — represents the countdown clock.

This times each unit's move; the duration can be selected by the player. Normal duration is 12.

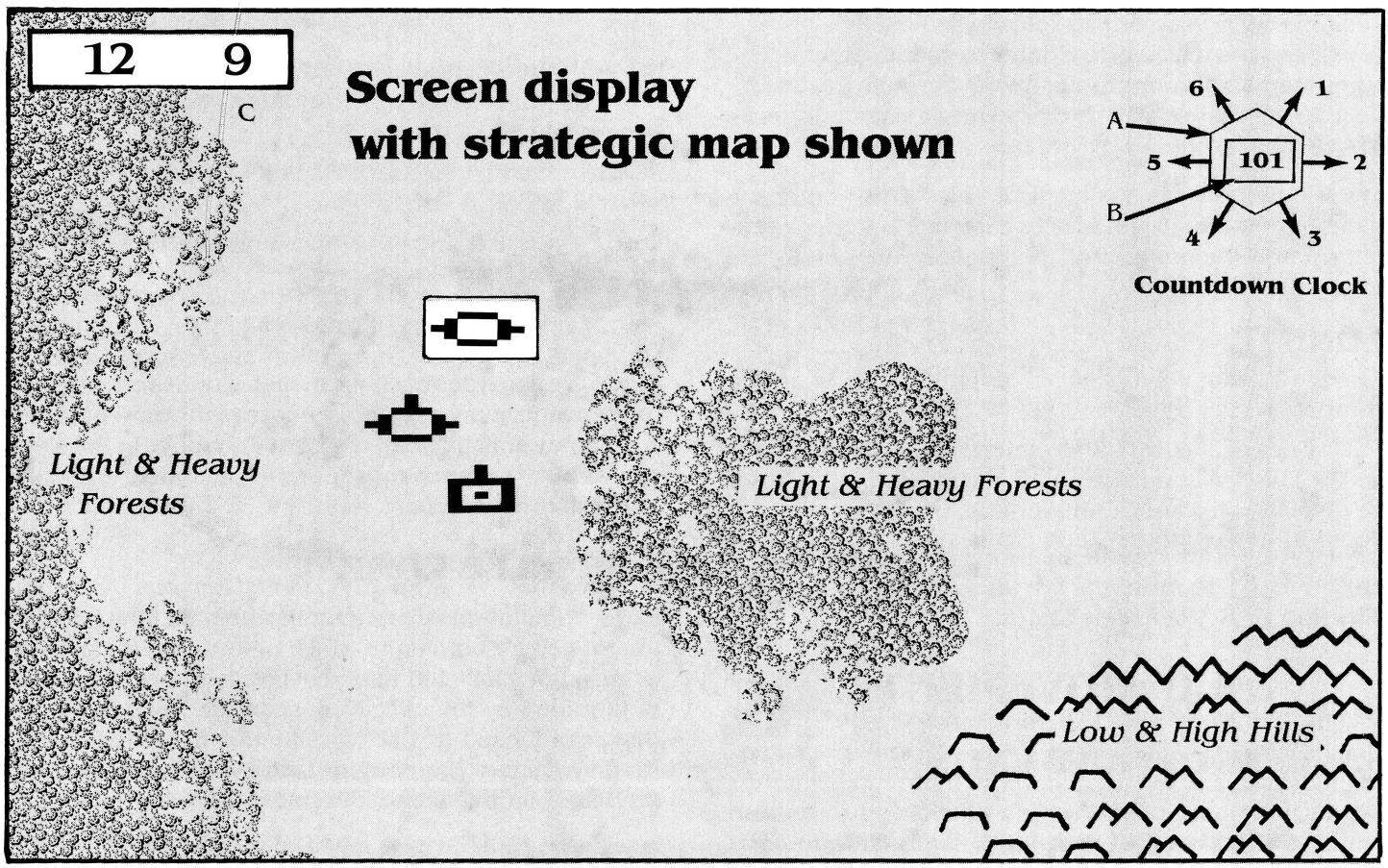
6

H — represents the direction (1-6) the displayed unit last moved or the command last given.

3.0 DEFINITIONS

Time-Point: One unit of time as measured by the counter on the upper right side of the screen. All movement is measured in time-points (light cavalry takes 3 time-points per hex, heavy cavalry takes 6, etc.)

Move: A unit's opportunity to move as dictated by the number of time-points it has to wait.



HC B D
Sh Jav E
1000 0 F

Enter Order
10.5 G
6 H

4.0 COMMAND CHART

NOTE: Normally, when talking to the computer, you will press the indicated key and then RETURN. Whenever the time-clock at the bottom of the screen is running, simply press the indicated key (NO return!)

The command keys for *The Shattered Alliance* are as follows:

MOVEMENT

Key 1-6 — moves the unit displayed in white direction 1 to 6 as shown.

Key 0 — leaves the indicated unit in the same hex until its next scheduled move.

AUXILIARY KEYS

Key H (halt) — stops the game until the return key is pressed.

Key M (map) — selects the type of map display. THEN press either Key "S" for the strategic map or Key "T" for the tactical map (and return). When the tactical map is displayed, the computer will ask for the row and column of the strategic map to be displayed. In the lower right corner of the tactical map, there is an indicator which shows where the units are placed on the tactical map.

Key E (end) — tells the computer to save the game. The computer will prompt the player(s) for instructions.

MAGIC

Key S (spell) — casts a magical spell. THEN enter the number of the spell you wish to cast (Key 1-4, then press return) and the number of spell points you wish to use (press RETURN).

COMBAT

Key A (attack) — engage an adjacent unit in melee combat.

THEN Key 1-6 and RETURN to select attack direction or Q and RETURN to abort. After a melee attack, a unit will not be displayed for twelve time-points.

Key F (fire) — fire missile weapons at a nearby unit. THEN Key 1-6 to move the fire target in the appropriate direction or Key Q aborts attack.

5.0 MOVEMENT

5.1 HOW TO MOVE UNITS:

At the beginning of the game, time-point zero, both armies will move all of their units. On each time-point afterwards, the computer will determine which units are ready to move and will light up a unit's symbol when it may move while the other units remain colored or gray. To move the indicated unit, simply press keys 1-6 to indicate the direction and the unit will move. After a unit is moved, the next unit to be moved will be displayed until all units due to be moved this time-point have been moved. NOTE: There will be many time-points during the game when no units are eligible to move; in this case the computer will skip them and move to the next time-point when a unit is due to be moved.

5.2 MOVEMENT DISPLAY:

In the upper right corner of the screen, there is a hexagonal pattern of numbers with a number inside. The hexagonal pattern is the movement direction indicator. Simply press a key (1-6) corresponding to the numbers of the hexagonal pattern and the unit which is ready to be moved will move in the direction of the number. On the bottom center of the screen, there is a three digit counter, which counts down the time left for this unit's move. If you don't move the unit before the counter runs out, the computer will move the unit in the direction it last moved.

5.3 RULES:

5.31 Only one unit may be moved at a time.

5.32 Movement and melee combat are not possible in the same move; fire combat and movement are.

5.33 Routed units move at the same rate as normal units.

5.34 Units may not exit the strategic map unless they move off while in rout mode; in this case they are lost for the remainder of the battle.

5.35 If a unit is routed, its opponent may for pursue for one move.

5.36 Routed and pursuing units are moved by the computer.

6.0 COMBAT

There are two types of combat: melee and fire. A unit may only engage in one type of combat per movement round. A unit may engage in fire combat and move in the same round, but it may not engage in melee combat and move in the same movement round.

6.1 MELEE COMBAT

When one unit melee attacks another, the attack factors are totaled for both units, which determines the number of casualties inflicted upon each unit. Attack factors are determined by the effectiveness of the weapon against the unit attacked, the tactical situation of each unit, and a random factor. The combat factor and casualty charts are listed on the Combat Data Card.

6.2 FIRE COMBAT

Fire combat is similar to melee combat. The attacker's combat factors are totaled; if the defender has missile weapons with sufficient range, he will return defensive

fire. (See Fire Combat Chart, below.) Then the casualties are calculated and subtracted from the appropriate units.

6.3 GENERAL RULES:

6.31 Units must be adjacent to engage in combat.

6.32 A unit may only attack once per move.

6.33 A unit which engages in melee combat will not be able to move or attack for twelve time-points.

6.34 A unit may fire missile weapons at an opponent to a maximum range of three hexes. The type of missile weapon dictates the range; bows have a range of three hexes; slings (rocks) have a range of two hexes; javelins must be adjacent (one hex) to fire.

Only defending units with missile weapons whose range is greater than or equal to the distance to the attacker can return defensive fire.

6.35 A firing unit must be able to trace a clear line of sight to the enemy.

The line of sight is blocked if there is an intervening unit or intervening terrain between the firing unit and its intended target.

6.4 BATTLE RESULTS

6.41 Melee combat can result in one of three outcomes: draw, victory or defeat.

For a battle to be judged other than a draw — i.e., a victory or a defeat — one of the units involved must inflict more casualties than it suffers AND cause at least 5% casualties on the other unit. The unit which inflicts the greater number of casualties in this case is judged to be the winner; the other unit the loser. If a unit, WITHOUT moving, loses more consecutive battles than its training class can withstand, it will rout. (see Morale Data Card)

7.0 MAGIC

NOTE: Not every scenario includes magic.

RULES

7.01 Each unit has a certain number of magic points which can be used to cast spells upon itself or the surrounding area.

7.02 These magic spells are cast by magicians attached to the individual units.

7.03 Spell duration is one movement round (the time between the casting unit's moves).

7.04 Each spell affects the operation of one friendly unit only.

7.05 A melee or fire attack on a unit which has magic has a small chance of killing the spell caster and negating the rest of the unit's spell capacity.

7.1 SPELLS:

1. Edge Enhancer — Each spell point cast adds one tactical factor to the combat factor total for melee or fire combat.

2. Shield — Each spell point reduces the opponent's combat factor total by one factor.

3. Haste — Each spell point allows the unit to move again at the next time-point.

4. Courage — Each spell point adds one point to the number of consecutive losses for morale purposes.

8.0 MORALE

Obviously, armies become disheartened by defeat and encouraged by victory. The problem, of course, is to replicate this during the game. In *The Shattered Alliance*, morale is measured on two levels: the army level and the unit level. Unit morale checks are made at certain times throughout the game (see below). A unit may rout, halt or take normal orders, depending upon the result of the morale check.

The army morale level constantly changes during the game. The level is affected by factors such as routing and halted units, battle results, or the destruction of a unit, etc. Changes in army morale affect both armies; a battle result will add to the winner's army morale AND subtract from the loser's army morale. If an army's morale level falls too low, it will sound the retreat and give up the field of battle.

8.1 RULES:

8.11 An individual unit checks morale at various times during the game.

8.12 Unit morale checks are made in this fashion: 3 six-sided die are rolled; the results averaged to this result is added any morale modifiers (see Morale Data Card). The total is compared to the Morale Table (see Morale Data Card).

8.13 There are three possible outcomes of morale check. The unit may:

1) Continue to take orders
2) Halt for 20 time-points and refuse to take orders
3) Rout

8.14 If a unit has routed, it will stay routed unless it passes a morale check and rallies to fight again. If unrallied, a routed unit will not move unless there is an enemy within 3 hexes. Then, if the routing unit reaches the edge of the board while any enemy is within 3 hexes, it will exit off the board and be lost. Otherwise, once the unit is 3 hexes from any enemy, the unit will stop and try to rally.

8.15 If a routed unit rallies, it may rejoin the battle.

9.0 TROOP TYPES:

The Osgorthian troop types during the period of the Last Battles were very much similar to the armies of Earth between the years 2000 B.C. to 1200 A.D. Often Osgorthian units from the Last Battles can be likened to famous units which existed on Earth (e.g., the Byzantine horse-archers, the Greek hoplites, the Roman legionaires).

9.1 INFANTRY:

LI or Light Infantry These soldiers are unarmored, fight in dispersed order, and carry the lightest of weapons for mobility. Their weapons include longbows, slings, javelins, and small swords. They are used for reconnaissance, skirmishing (they are deadly with missile weapons), and ambushing the enemy.

Prime examples of these troops were Alexander's "Agrianians" — armed with javelin and shield.

LMI or Light Medium Infantry These troops were armed much like Light Infantry, except they fought in closer order.

The best examples are the 19th century Zulu warriors, armed with shield and axe or javelin.

MI or Medium Infantry This class of soldiers was the backbone of many ancient armies. They were lightly armored (in leather jackets or the like) and fought in close order with pikes, spears or javelins. They were used for recon and main line infantry; also for holding flanks against enemy envelopments.

The best Terran equivalent was Philip of Macedon's Phalanx, equipped with pike and shield. The armies of the Egyptian Pharaohs would also qualify: they were equipped with javelin and shield.

LHI or Light Heavy Infantry Otherwise like Heavy Infantry, these troops fought in a more dispersed order than the "heavies".

The Greek "Hypaspists" (Shield Bearers), with long spear and shield, were prime examples.

HI or Heavy Infantry These are the classic heavy troops. These troops were heavily armored with scale mail (and later, chain mail) over their bodies. Generally equipped with a shield, they carried long spears or pikes for their main weapons, swords for secondary weapons. They were reserved for the main attack, and were extra-ordinarily successful.

The classic armies incorporated heavy infantry. Examples include the Greek "Hoplites", with long spear and shield; the Vikings, equipped with spears, two-handed axes and shield; also the Roman legionnaires, armed with Pilum (long spear), short sword and shield.

9.2 CAVALRY:

NOTE: The cavalry types listed below did not use stirrups, until they were introduced in the 6th century A.D. Before that time, soldiers were organized in auxiliary infantry or cavalry armies. Cavalry generally played an auxiliary role to the more numerous infantry armies.

LC or Light Cavalry A necessary part of every army; these are the scouts, skirmishers, foragers and raiders of the army. Open order troops, they are unarmored and depend upon their speed for protection. Often armed with light lances or javelins for raiding, they are also used as skirmishers with horse bows.

Two famous examples of light cavalry are the Bactrian horse-archers, armed with bows, and the infamous Mongols, equipped with bow or javelin and shield.

MC or Medium Cavalry When light cavalry are put into a close formation, medium cavalry is the result. Osgorthian "mediums" wear leather or no armor and carry light lances, swords or javelins. They tend to fight as screening troops. Due to their lack of armor, and their formation, they are especially vulnerable in melee.

The Vandal army was mainly organized as medium cavalry.

HC or Heavy Cavalry These mobile shock troops were the backbone of many ancient armies. Partially armored with metal or bone and usually armed with heavy lances or javelins, their task was to drive the opposing cavalry from the field.

A famous example is Alexander's "Companions". Armed with javelin and shield, they were the finest cavalry of the age.

EHC or Extra-Heavy Cavalry The heaviest and most powerful shock troops of their period, they could sweep almost any infantry from the field. The troopers were heavily armored; often the horses were also armored. Since they were often armed with lances, they were the only cavalry who could break the heavy infantry of the day. The best tactic to break their charge was missile fire, which was used with deadly accuracy by the English at Agincourt. Otherwise, their charge was devastating.

The most feared troops of their day were the Byzantine "Kataphraktoi" or Cataphracts. Extra-heavy cavalry, equipped with bow, lance and shield, they were superbly trained troops and made many an barbarian shake in his armor.

10.0 SOLITAIRE

The Shattered Alliance includes an intelligent solitaire player capable of controlling either army in any battle. In the purely solitaire scenarios, the computer will control all units needing control. Further, the computer will control hidden units for the solitaire scenario.

11.0 DESIGNER'S NOTES

This game is intended to be the first in a series. There will

be two games (Battle and Campaign) for every important time period (Ancients, Napoleonics, WW II, Space, etc. . . .). *The Shattered Alliance* is the Battle game for the time before gunpowder, i.e., sword and sorcery. It is based on my experience playing Ancient Miniatures using the excellent WRG (Wargames Research Group) rules.

The inspiration for the 'timing' elements of the game came from my friends who've said, "Gee, I'd like to play one of those neat two-player computer wargames with you, but don't you have one that doesn't take so LONG!" So I invented the movement system that is at the heart of the game. The unique computer-controlled movement system creates the possibility of a game that will move almost as fast as the players can punch the keys. This is because the program update time is done on a piece/unit basis rather than on a player/army basis. This helps to create a real-time feel that is more like an arcade game than a traditional wargame. Most important is that it allows for two players to sit at the console at the same time. To make sure things wouldn't get boring I added a computer-enforced time limit on each move. I think the result is a game just as exciting as 5-minute chess and it's easy to learn how to play.

12.0 CREDITS

Game Design and Programming: John Lyon

Game Development and Rules: Jeff Garaventa

Story of The Chronicles of Osgorth: Marcia Trusk

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Typesetting: Abracadabra Type

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We would also like to recognize the following:

Darrell Aldritch for Higher Graphics

The War Games Research Group for their excellent miniatures rules and army list

Milgamex for their excellent ancient army lists

Excerpts from the Chronicles of Osgorth

as recounted by Sidonia the Sage

The CHRONICLES OF OSGORTH were discovered by the Terran Expedition of 1169 P.H. (Pax Humana). Its leader, Marlys Elsinor, brought the 46 Tomes back to Earth in 1177. They have been a source of constant fascination ever since. Upon arrival, they were immediately incorporated into the ENCYCLOPAEDIA UNIVERSA and were first published for the general public in 1189.

The following excerpt is taken from Tome 12. Its subject is the First Battles of Osgorth; the author is the most famous historian of Osgorth's ancient epoch, Sidonia the Sage.

It seems that everyone who can lift a weapon has taken to arms. In times of war common civility is forgotten. When the nether-villagers were forced to flee their homes they set fire to their crops so that the land would be of no use to the dread Zorgs in pursuit. This fire was started with the works of Rodrew the Craftsman. For generations the works of Rodrew have furnished king's halls. This is a lamentable loss.

Also destroyed in the wake of fire are andromes worth of original documents in the Tome Towers. I question the sanctimony of the commander who ordered this; I do not question his logic. When a fire is needed a flammable substance is required. Wouldn't a haystack have sufficed? Many of these ancient texts are irreplaceable! Who will sing this commander's praises or curse his judgement andromedes from now if someone else burns these present records for the cause of war?

It is an enormous undertaking we historical scribes have before us—to reconstruct the past of Osgorth by sifting through the ashes and the hearsay.

This task alone is enough to make a chronicler exchange quill for blade in the way the Valkyries did so many andromedes ago when they were attacked by the Zorgs in the Ambush of 690 O.R. This tale is reconstructed from notes gathered in the anonymous work entitled MEMORIES OF THE MEADOW MAIDENS.

Under the cloud covered Mountains of Demeley where the coast meets the Heywood Forest dwell the Centaurs, Unicorns, Valkyries, and other wondrous creatures such as the Blue-eyed Zergzees. Their early history reveals them to be peaceful and content. There are no written records of the origins of the Valkyrie Maidens and their Unicorn mounts because they themselves kept no such records. They were deemed a flighty race whose only interest was frolic.

The horned horses were attended by maidens of exceptional beauty. These Valkyries were to the Unicorns as shepherdesses are to sheep. The Valkyries and Unicorns lived side by side with the Centaurs who often joined them in pursuit of pastoral pleasures.

The Valkyries seemed neither concerned nor aware of the marauding bands of Zorgs nor with the succession of kings that reigned in Northwold. It was accepted throughout the realm of Northwold that the Heywood Forest and surrounding meadowlands were Valkyrie territory. Access through the forest was denied to no one. Lizardmen crossed Valkyrie paths whenever they made their treks down to the sea. Hozgits would herd their pigs under the leafy trees on their way to some of the large city trading areas. Even the primitive Zorgs moved freely through the forest.

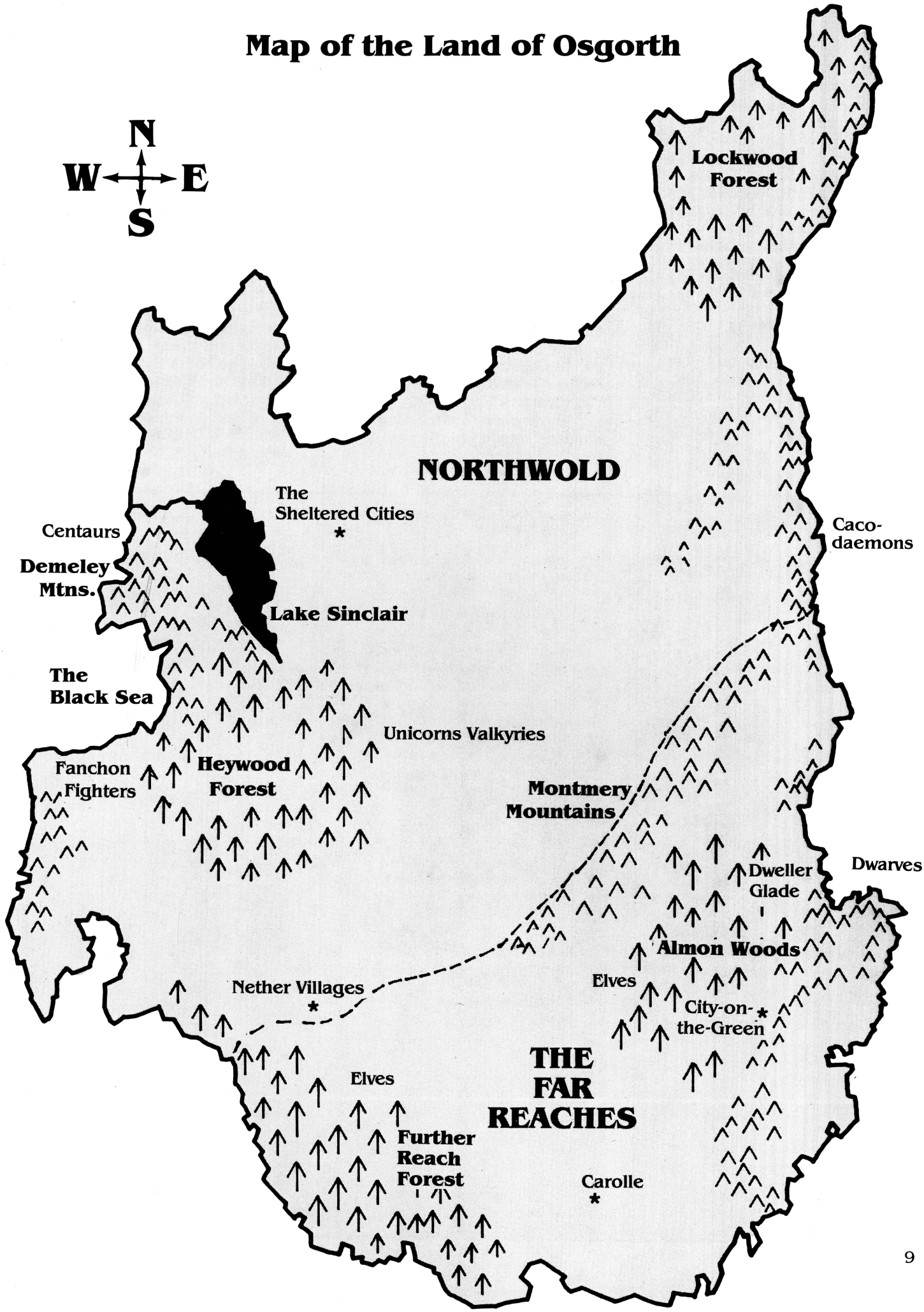
The Valkyries never had strife with their hooved neighbors from the northern mountains nor with their western neighbors, the Fanchon Fighters. That strong tribe of women, the Fanchon Fighters, held secure the coast of the Black Sea. They looked little to their right for the peacefulness of the Valkyries was legendary. The Fanchons thought even less of any creatures who knew not the skills of combat. For the Fanchons fighting is a way of life as sure as the sunset each night in southern Osgorth.

At this time all the humanoid tribes (with the exception of the Valkyries) had aligned themselves with either the Kingdom of Northwold or the Far Reaches. Besides the Valkyries and the Unicorns, the only remaining unattached tribes were the fearsome Zorgs and the awesome Cacodaemons that dwelt along the mountainous eastern coast.

A rumor had filtered through the realm that treasure of untold worth was guarded by the Fanchon females in the shallow waters of the Black Sea by which they made their home. Zorgs are not noted for heeding rightful ownership before acquiring new possessions. They elicited the help of the ever ready Dwarves (ready whenever untold amounts of gold were at stake) and sought access to the Black Sea coast through the Heywood Forest. The initial Zorg scouts never made it through. The Valkyries saw them approaching, learned of their ill purpose, and warned the Fanchon Fighters.

The submerged treasure mystery was resolved more quickly than the tempers of the Zorgs. When the King of Northwold hinted that a donation of a small portion of such great

Map of the Land of Osgorth



wealth would be welcome as added revenue for his kingdom, the Fanchon Fighters quickly repudiated the rumor. The matter seemed settled to everyone's satisfaction except the Zorgs, who have never been renowned for their intellect. The Zorgs' gain would have been nothing had they stormed through the Heywood Forest to reach a treasureless coast. Yet they carried a grudge and pledged the Zorg Vow of Vengence against the Valkyries.

The Zorgs waited until spring when the Valkyries and Unicorns head for the glens to celebrate the approach of the Planting Cycle. The Centaurs join in the festivities which include feasting, dancing-on-the-meadow, toasting with new wine, and musical plays. The annual celebration lasts all day and night and into the early hours of dawn. Thus the Zorgs had a whole day to infiltrate the Forest.

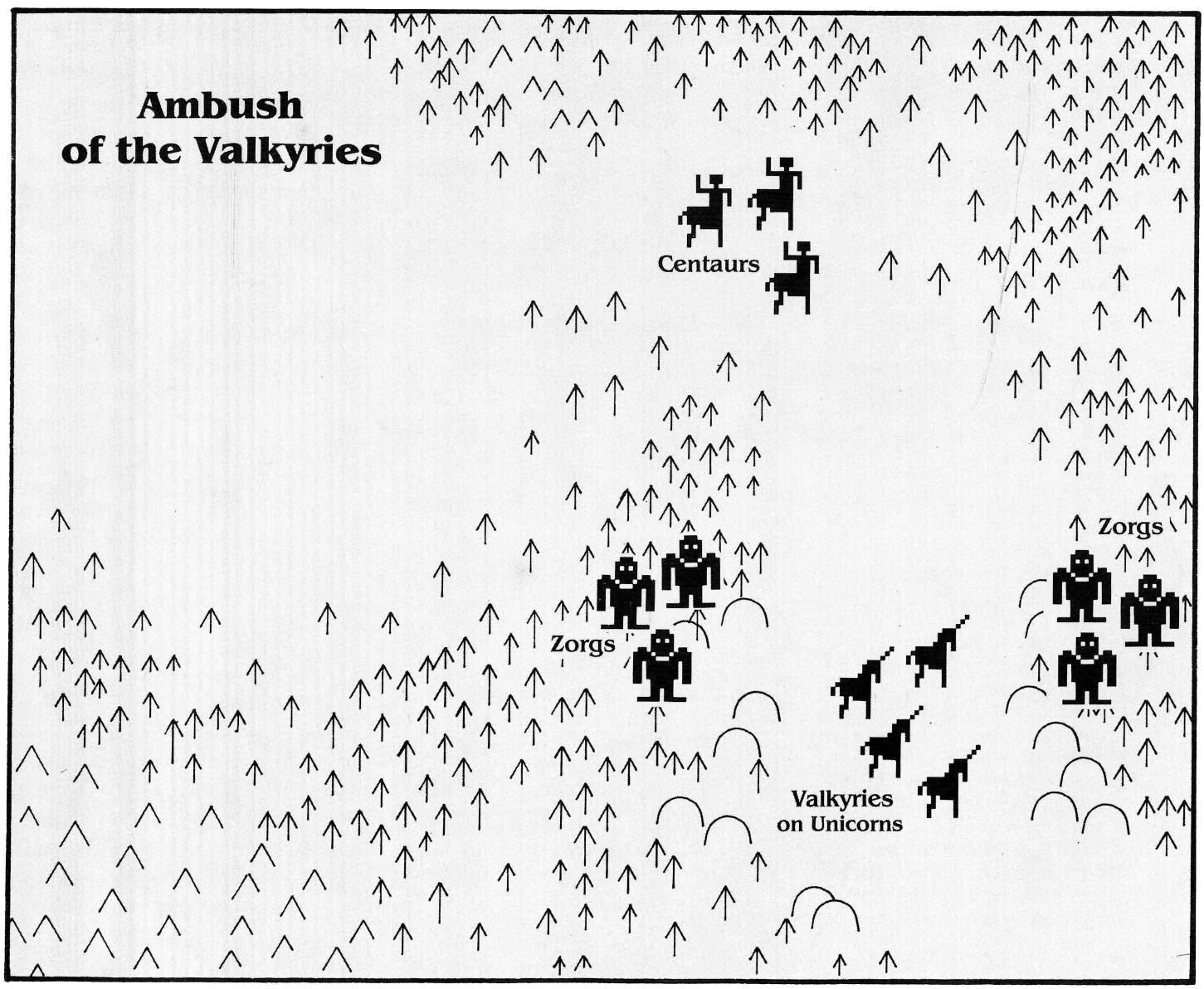
Unsuspecting Unicorns, hooves sore from overzealous prancing, and tired Valkyries were headed back to their homes after the long day of merrymaking when the Zorgs sprang on them from the trees. The brave Unicorns did their best to defend the virtually unarmed maidens against the Zorgs. The Zorgs had an easy advantage and many a maiden and Unicorn went down.

What would have been a slaughter was avoided by the intervention of the semi-sober Centaurs. As it was, the losses of the Valkyries and Unicorns were high. Their peaceful ways were marred by bitterness against the Zorgs. The Ambush of the Abominable Zorgs is also referred to as The Awakening of the Valkyries.

These once carefree meadow maidens sought out the help of the Fanchon Fighters who readily schooled them in the art of combat. Tales of their determination spread through the realm and reached the ears of King Garrick (Father of the present day King Noran of Northwold). In exchange for their pledges of loyalty he had his famed mounted knights instruct the Valkyries in defense along with their faithful Unicorns.

The meadow maidens became legendary in their thirst for battle-wisdom. Once the only sounds that floated from the forest were musical reeds or voices raised in song. Now the woods resounded with the clang of metal as the Valkyries mastered spear and shield.

The Zorgs scoffed at these efforts and referred to the newly armored maidens as "meadow muffins." As the Valkyries rode out with their Unicorn steeds there was more sneering about the "horn-



herders" being "as harmless as Hozgits". The Zorgs did not laugh long. The Valkyries' devotion to their training made them formidable. King Garrick called on them without hesitation to fill his ranks on many a pressing occasion.

The memory of these women as carefree meadow maidens is dim indeed. Their reputation as Battle Guardians has spread. The Valkyries have not totally severed themselves from their gentle past. It is with compassion that they tend to the slain of any tribe on the battlefield. It is said that they are attracted to those who fall heroically in battle.

Other sources claim the Valkyries are emboldened with a special power that aids them in battle. Witnesses have attested to the fact that when the Valkyries ride forth on their Unicorn mounts, their armor shines with a strange light reminiscent of the unexplainable lights seen ofttimes in the northern sky. It was for this reason that the Valkyries were the first to be questioned at the initial sighting of the Floating Star in 773 O.R.

King Noran of Northwold and King Gavin of the Far Reaches once held between them all the strength of the combined tribes of Osgorth. Their time is passing and the peoples' loyalty has been splintered by Ormolu. (I would have it noted here that in many of the documents found in the Elder Archives Ormolu the Sorceror is often confused with the tribe of the same name . . . Of course this was before scribes had to pass The Test of Literacy).

It has been said that the appointment of Ormolu as Court Magician of The Far Reaches coincided with the fading of the Floating Star and the appearance of the new tribe which calls itself the Moonriders. The only remaining record of the event is taken from the journal of Axel, Scribe of Northwold. The entry is dated Peredel-10 773 O.R., Fourth Cycle:

A messenger returning today from the Far Reaches reported that King Gavin was aware of the bright new Floating Star seen of late over Northwold. King Gavin let it be known that this strange Floating Star has been sighted in the night sky over all of Osgorth. King Gavin also claims his priests predicted its coming by signs evident in the entrails of newly slaughtered unblemished lambs, by midwives' reports of more multiple births than usual in the kingdom, by disturbing dreams of foreboding, by the presence of goose bumps . . .

Further evidence upholding this theory is cited from this later report by the personal healer of King Gavin:

. . . heeds not the rumor that Ormolu the Sorceror is a member of those who call themselves Moonriders. The Sorceror denies this, saying that he is but a scholar of languages, this being why he can speak the tongue of the Moonriders.

The Moonrider who was detained here by King Gavin is something of a curiosity. When Lyn of Carolle questioned him about the phenomenon of the Floating Star the Moonrider did laugh and say that the Moonriders *were* the Floating Star! It was at this time that Ormolu the Sorceror was alerted to the signs that the Moonrider was suffering from the delirium of fever and ordered him quarantined until the exact nature of his affliction could be determined.

I would have attended the ill man myself but Ormolu maintains he has superior skill in dealing with plague victims. I am not familiar with this sickness and I do have pressing needs elsewhere . . .

Sixth Cycle: The Moonrider died today in isolation. It is under Ormolu's recommendation that all contact with Moonriders be avoided until he can determine when we will be free from contamination.

Upon re-examination of historical accounts it seems clear that the Great Rending began with the breaking of the Osgorthian Treaty of Fellowship. Here follows an excerpt from THE RAMBLING OPINIONS OF SIR TANDY:

The exact cause of the breaking of the Osgorthian Treaty of Fellowship has been debated for countless andromedes. It may be that the Zorgs raided less and less on the fortified towns in Northwold, thus dimming King Noran's wisdom as to their treachery. It may be that Ormolu, having the ear of King Gavin, whispered against the Moonriders, who seem of late to favor King Noran. Weaknesses have been cited in both kings' policies.

King Noran heeds the Moonriders who speak of harmony with all races, Beast and Human. They are the ones who turned him towards culture, fine arts, and music. The Knights of Northwold rely more and more upon their high stone walls to keep out the Beasts rather than upon their skill in battle. The emphasis on training has shifted. Swordsmanship and Horsemanship are still a heavy part of a knight's training, but more and more so are the Lyre, Pigment Painting, and Pleasant Discourse.

For once even Ormolu agrees with the Moonriders and states that peace is his ultimate goal also. He may be trying to pacify the Moonriders' protests against his introduction of Magic into King Gavin's realm. They are still muttering about "upsetting the Balance of Life on Osgorth's Scale."

If King Noran relies too heavily on the Moonriders then King Gavin relies too heavily on Ormolu's Blade Enhancer spells. I think it was against his better judgement that King Gavin finally agreed to sign the Osgorthian Treaty of Fellowship for which King Noran had been pushing for so many andromedes.

Since both kings approved this treaty, the tribes of both realms could do nothing but swallow nervously a few times and follow it. I will not here go into all the clauses of the treaty, but basically it recognizes the rights of various Beast Tribes, including the Zorgs, giving them the status of Humans; Beasts

were given access to all watering holes, unaccosted entry into taverns, and the honor of being bestowed with the High Sign and Greeting when Human and Beast should meet on the road.

After many a well was fouled, tavern furniture broken up, and free citizens robbed before they could so much as utter "Have a merry andromede", many tribes rebelled and there was fierce rioting and discontent in both realms. Both the Knights of Northwold and the Hawks of Gavin were sent away more and more to quell disputes. Thus, with armies dispersed and the once allied tribes in severe discord, Ormolu took advantage of the moment to spur the Zorgs and Caco-daemons on to what became known as The Defeat of the Beasts. Discourse on this battle comes from the Oration of Waldemar the Mighty given in 785 O.R.

It seems that the wisdom of both kings is waning. Gavin grows ever more dependent on the Magic doled out to him in small doses by that crafty sorcerer, Ormolu. And Noran, once so adept at keeping the fractious tribes at arm's length (or weapon tip) of one another has begun to stretch their patience with him and their tempers with one another by encouraging them to mingle more and more. Noran has become obsessed with the prospect of the Moonriders' "Harmony of all Peoples".

The time is prime for a great rending. What once was a solid two-kingdom planet is crumbling over poisoned words whispered sweetly into the ears of kings. The Beasts have taken advantage of the disunity that's sweeping the realm, growing bolder and grosser by the andromite. Look how narrowly we defeated them on the edge of Northwold!

After the signing of the Osgorthian Treaty of Fellowship, disharmony is the only thing spreading in the realms! King Noran still openly extolls his longtime ally, King Gavin, praising his Hawks for their battle savvy. Privately I know he's being tugged towards secret doubts. He should listen to the warning that perhaps this new Magic is making his old royal friend too powerful. I think Noran takes too much pride in his own cultural pursuits, but Gavin looks barbaric in comparison.

Another piece on THE GREAT RENDING, (a phrase coined by Waldemar the Mighty,) follows. It is dated 791 O.R. by C. Jacob.

In The Far Reaches, King Gavin was reluctant to share his Magic with the changed ruler of Northwold, especially after committing the folly of signing a treaty with Beasts. Indeed even the very sight of Gavin's framed copy of the treaty on the wall was revolting to him. Beneath his flourish of a signature and Noran's skilled work of penmanship was a collection of inky smears that were paw prints, claw scratchings, and the print of a cloven hoof or two.

Gavin was growing impatient with Noran, thinking all his preaching of peace pointed the way towards early senility, a touch of the plague, or both. Gavin, too, grew overconfident with his position and relied too much on the help of Ormolu.

Noran, angry enough at Gavin's refusal to share magical powers, learned that the Moonriders had special knowledge of Magic but somehow had always neglected to mention this. Hot words flamed back and forth across the realms, fanned by the underhanded hand of the Sorceror Ormolu.

As the inevitable war between kingdoms drew near, the Moonriders were issued an ultimatum: they must either add Magic to the other arts they nourished in Northwold, or suffer banishment. The Moon-riders went sadly into exile.

After the first blows in the great Battle of the Two Kingdoms were exchanged, King Gavin looked to Ormolu for assistance. There was no one there. Thus was the Treachery of Ormolu revealed. If there was one way in which everyone in these discordant times agreed, it was in their anger at Ormolu the Sorcerer. Ormolu knew he had fallen into extreme disfavor. He received the blame for every ill-boding political action and economic woe, as the texts of these scrolls, which were posted throughout the realm, reveal:

WANTED: DEAD OR DEFEATED
That most foul and traitorous, vain of thought, vile of action, sworn enemy to the King of the Far Reaches . . . He who calls himself the Sorcerer Ormolu. Any being having knowledge of his whereabouts should report such information directly to His Majesty, King Gavin. Any being who conceals such knowledge or is caught harboring this Highest of Court Criminals shall have his lands duly confiscated, his family imprisoned, and a sentence of co-conspiracy and treason levied against him.

Elsewhere in the realm:

REWARD: For information concerning the capture and punishment of that most foul and treacherous, vain of thought, vile of action, sworn enemy to the King of The Far Reaches . . . He who calls himself the Sorceror Ormolu. It shall be awarded to any being: an added tract of land, the sum of 50 gold reachers, impunity from all past crimes, and exemption from all taxation for three andromedes.

There are conflicting reports about the apprehension or destruction of the sorceror. Many tribes have claimed the reward for having brought about Ormolu's demise, but no valid document yet confirms any of these claims. Glydestride the Centaur has been quoted:

For nearly an andromede our land has been crawling with bounty hunters, (mostly Dwarves), mercenaries, (mostly Dwarves), and anyone else seeking to do away with the Sorceror and collect the reward.

We've all underestimated this Ormolu. He is master of illusion. I know because I tracked him to the Dweller Glade. He knew I was following him. It was as though he were baiting me by beckoning me onward. Suddenly he raised his staff and began to mumble in that Moonrider gibberish. The next thing I knew I was surrounded by Ormolu. I swear there were at least seven of him! I don't know how he did it. The hoof is quicker than the eye, they say. It was Magic for sure.

Well, I barely escaped with my tail intact! Now those Moonriders have resurfaced. Apparently they've changed their minds because they've promised to teach the Centaurs a pretty piece of Magic. They say they know a way for us to charge this Ormolu at a pace faster than a gallop. Now there isn't a creature that exists that can come close to matching the speed of a charging Centaur, so that'd be some trick!

It seems these Moonriders are journeying from tribe to tribe teaching what magical protection they can in order to undo the mischief of Ormolu. I'm going to learn this Magic and have another go at him myself!

We are embroiled at present in the Battle of the Two Kingdoms. The fighting grows closer to the Sheltered Cities every andromite. There are those who look to the Moonriders and say they are the cause of conflict in the realms. Others look to the Moonriders in the hope that their Magic will resolve the war. No one can yet predict its outcome. I only hope that I live to record it.

— Sidonia

Here follows a description of some of the Armies, Tribes, and Races of Osgorth and their motivations taken from **Osgorth's Bestiary and Roadside Tavern Guide.***

Cacodaemons: a bipedal race of Beasts, taller than Humans. Cacodaemons are easily distinguished from Zorgs by the horns protuding over the tops of their heads.

Cacodaemons favor the spear as a weapon and boast of a very accurate aim. It is believed that they see as well at night as in the daylight hours. They are cunning hunters who make their home in the Montmery Mountains of eastern Osgorth. They rarely come down to the populated areas of Osgorth except in the wintertime when severity of weather and scarcity of game force them into the valleys or towns in search of food. They have been known to make raids on the inhabitants at such times.

Centaurs: a race, half human/half horse, that inhabits the highest peaks in the Mountains of Demeley. Centaurs constitute a large fraction of Osgorth's accomplished musicians, philosophers, and artists. They are also renowned for their skill as warriors. Young Human knights-in-training often are sent to be educated by Centaurs.

Centaurs utilize a variety of weapons, including maces, clubs, bows, and lances. Male and female Centaurs fight side by side in battle. Braiding the tail is the current fashion for the females of the species.

Dwarves: a race presumed to be distantly related to Zorgs. (But you'd better have your hand on your weapon if you dare suggest this to a Dwarf to his face!) Dwarves can easily meet most challenges with their battle-axes. They are unmatched in skill with this weapon.

Dwarves are considered to be the opposite of Elves. Where Elves prefer the sunlight and surface of Osgorth, Dwarves are content living underground. The contrast applies to their appearances, as well. Dwarves tend to have long noses and ruddy complexions. With their heavy beards and ancient faces, even young Dwarves look like old Humans.

Dwarves are master craftsmen of metals and wood, and are excellent shipwrights.

It is said that the allegiance of Dwarves can be easily bought. They will fight on either side if the price is right — or so rumor has it.

Elves: as a race are considered superior to Humans because they possess keener powers of sight and hearing. Their ways are sometimes a mystery to humankind and many superstitions surround their culture. The Elves seem the most adept at utilizing Moonrider Magic. They took to it quickly, as if they had a natural penchant for Magic.

Elves are a race both handsome and fair. They have a childlike quality and are often mistaken for young humans. Elves are characterized as noble and honest. They have a reputation for being chivalrous in manner and for making good on all their debts.

Elves prefer sunlight to shade, day to night, and summer to winter. Elves are more active in the summer months. They are fond of sports and conduct many games. Elves are deft with the longbow. They are considered excellent horsemen and they train their own mounts.

In winter the Elves stay close to their forest homes and rarely visit the cities. With the arrival of spring they take to the roads again and mingle more with the other races. It is an Osgorthian omen of good luck to meet the First Elf of Spring on the open road. In ancient tales from the *Creation of Osgorth* Elves are said to have been put on Osgorth to bring joy to humankind.

Places of Elven influence are the Almon Woods and the City-on-the-Green. Many Elves also come from the Further Reach Forest.

Fanchon Fighters: warlike females who espouse a philosophy of freedom. Their tribal origins as women warriors goes back several andromes. Unlike the Valkyries, Fanchon Fighters totally exclude men from their ranks and territory. They dwell on the coast of the Black Sea.

Fanchon Fighters do not use horses. They prefer unrestricted movement on the ground, relying on the spear and shield.

Fedran's Feast and Retreat: located on the outskirts of the City-on-the-Green. This popular inn is frequented by Elves and Humans alike. It is run by a genial Elf and his

*This small volume was found in 1192 P.H. by a joint archeological expedition to the lost city of Namore in the Far Reaches. It has provided scholars with the best portrayal of ancient Osgorth. Here are a few excerpts:

wife, a noblewoman of Northwold.

Fedran sets a good table and the cuisine is distinctly Elven. The proprietor is also an accomplished Harpist and with very little urging he will entertain his guests.

The Hawks of Gavin: trained Human troops loyal to King Gavin of The Far Reaches, recognizable from the battle hawk emblem on their shields.

Hoof and Trough: a Hozgit eatery serving a variety of corn-based meals. For a nominal fee one can have such palatable delights as: corn on the cob, corn off the cob, cornmiller's mush, cornbread, breaded corn, creamed corn soup, cold corn chowder, sweet corn, corn pudding, corncakes, corncola. A real cornucopia of flavor.

The Hoof and Trough is also famous for its mosaic frescoes artfully done with several varieties of lentils. They are located in the market square of westmost Sheltered City.

Hozgits: a tribe as well as a race. These are pig-like herders of hogs, characterized by their long broad noses (resembling pigs' snouts), their coarse bristly hair, and their thick torsos. Hozgits have a curled tail like that of the animals they herd. (This can be seen only in suckling Hozgits as it is considered vulgar for an adult Hozgit to display the tail.)

Hozgits walk upright and have fingers and toes (not hooves, a common misconception). They do lack thumbs. Their four-fingered hands and four-toed feet are symmetrically splayed.

Hozgits are indeed akin to the animals they herd. There is an affectionate bond between hog and Hozgit. Hozgits use no restraints on their pigs, but speak to them in their own tongue and the pigs obey. The language of the Hozgits has been described as a cross between snorting and squealing. A person with a loud boistrous laugh is often accused of "snorting like a Hozgit".

The Hozgits group themselves in close-knit clans. They are the nomads of civilized Osgorth, packing up and traveling along populated routes. Hozgits are always a welcome sight due to their easygoing natures and large appetites. They are beings of many opinions, but they offer little if any interference in the Human affairs.

Knights of Northwold: trained Human troops loyal to King Noran; protectors of the realm of Northwold.

Lizardmen: a race and a tribe, a crossbreed of Reptiles and *Homo sapiens*. An old Osgorthian myth tells us that the race was born when a lizard egg was struck by lightning.

There are two varieties (tribes) of Lizardmen: Arid and Water. The Arids live in the warmer, dryer regions of Osgorth. The Waters live along the coasts and have a softer, moister skin. Lizardmen are tall with slender bodies and tails. Their scales vary in color from iridescent blue and green to purple. Females of the species have scales in hues of brown, and smaller mouths.

There is an association within the tribes of Lizardmen called *Mzliz*. These are independent females ("Lizardpersons" as they have called themselves since the Osgorthian Treaty of Fellowship, which gave them rights, too.)

These intelligent creatures were hurt by the Osgorthian Treaty of Fellowship. They resented being named "Beast" along with Zorgs. Lizardmen have never considered themselves to be in the same league with Zorgs. Indeed, a Lizardman would be greatly upset if his sister consorted with a Zorg.

Lords of Lockwood: a group made up of forest dwellers and dissatisfied Knights of Northwold who joined forces and revolted, wishing to establish their own realm within the collapsing ones.

This heavy cavalry is sometimes referred to as "the poor man's army" because few can afford barding for their horses. Though composed of renegades of the realm, the Lords of Lockwood forget their quarrel when it comes to Humans vs. Beasts.

Moonriders: offshoots of an interstellar race, who were responsible for bringing Magic to Osgorth. Moonriders are those extraterrestial beings (and their descendents) who crashed on Osgorth many andromedes ago. Moonriders hold that peace is the goal of all battles. They are a noble race who have a history of making bad moves with good intentions. Moonriders vowed not to interfere with the normal advancement of Osgorth except to undo the tampering of Ormolu. They reluctantly taught the inhabitants of Osgorth the ways of Magic in order to prevent an global takeover by Ormolu.

There are no distinguishing traits that would differentiate between a Moonrider and a Human.

Ormolu: is the name of an ambitious sorceror who was one of the original Moonriders. He sought to set kingdoms and tribes against one other and intended to use Moonrider Magic to gain himself a world to rule.

Those Moonriders would not go along with a policy of non-interference in Osgorthian affairs joined forces and became an organization (tribe) known as *Ormolu*. "Ormolu" refers to any followers of the Sorceror Ormolu, whether they be former Moonriders or just ordinary citizens of Osgorth.

Unicorns: fierce horselike animals noted for the spiraled horn in the middle of their forehead (some cavicorn varieties), tamed by the Valkyries. Almost driven to extinction by the Zorgs in the Ambush of 690 O.R. The only place on Osgorth this animal can be found is in the Heywood Forest. Unicorns never leave this sanctuary unless accompanied by the Valkyries.

Legend has it that Unicorns possess the power to neutralize poison. The Valkyries are said to know this process, but they keep the method a secret.

Valkyries: a tribe of women who use Unicorns as steeds. They make their home in the Heywood Forest.

Many Valkyrie women of note have served as messengers for the kings of Northwold. They live peacefully within their forest, but are fierce fighters without. Legends of Osgorth say they select slain heroes on the battlefield (without regard to race or tribe) and do homage to them. They are easily recognized in battle due to their highly polished armor, shields, and swords.

Windseekers: (light cavalry) an offshoot of the Knights of Northwold. Windseekers wear only the lightest of armor are almost religious in their opposition to being held back or obstructed by weighty metal or slow-moving steeds. They have a reputation for movement as fast as the wind. And they charge into battle as if a hurricane were on their heels.

Zorgs: a subhuman race that fights for fun, sport, and spite. Zorgs have never recognized the legitimacy of the crown nor the laws of the realm. They are savage primitives, coarse and unmannerly. For weaponry they rely on clubs and rocks.

Zorgs are fearsome in appearance with long teeth like those of dogs. They fall short of having the upright gait of Humans. Human mothers have been known to admonish their children by saying, "Stand up straight. You're walking like a Zorg!"

GLOSSARY

Osgorthian Terms:

Androme — one hundred years in Osgorthian time; relates to Earth's century

Andromite — a brief unit of time, an Osgorthian minute

Andromede — an Osgorthian year

Cycle — refers to the seasons of the Osgorthian year and the hours of the day. First Cycle = first hour of the day, Second Cycle = second hour of the day, . . . until Twelfth Cycle (noon), then repeats backwards: Cycle One = first hour after noon, Cycle Two = second hour after noon, etc.

Reacher — coin of The Far Reaches equal to one day's labor for the average working Osgorthian

People and Places in Ancient Osgorth

Ambush of the Zorgs — in the Fell Year of 690, see also The Awakening of the Valkyries

Awakening of the Valkyries — see Ambush of the Zorgs

Axel — "the Scribe"; served in the court of Northwold throughout King Noran's reign. Author of **The Quest of Roanna.**

Battle Guardians — the Valkyries

Battle of the Two Kingdoms — a war fought on Osgorth in 792 O.R. between the realms of Northwold and The Far Reaches

Cacodaemons — a tall Beast race inhabiting the Montmery Mountains

Centaurs — a race of creatures having the hind end and legs of a horse and the torso, arms, and head of a human

Defeat of the Beasts — took place in 785 O.R. shortly after the signing of the Osgorthian Treaty of Fellowship

Dwarves — a short and stocky humanoid race

Dweller Glade — resort spot favored by Dwarven women within the Almon Forest

Elder Archives — original sections of the Tome Towers

Fanchon Fighters — female warriors who dwell on the coast of the Black Sea

The Far Reaches — kingdom in southern Osgorth

Floating Star — an unexplained celestial phenomenon first sighted in 773 O.R.

Garrick II — ruler of Northwold, son of Garrick I, father of Nolan and Noran, reigned from 680-720. (7th King of Northwold)

Gavin — King of The Far Reaches from 766 until the downfall of the realm in approximately 795 O.R. (5th King of The Far Reaches)

Glydestride — 756-?; Centaur philosopher, artist, and warrior distinguished in the Defeat of the Beasts

Great Rending — the downfall of the realms of The Far Reaches and Northwold in 785 O.R.

Hawks of Gavin — army under King Gavin of The Far Reaches

Heywood Forest — ancient broadleaf forest located in west Northwold, home of the Valkyries and Unicorns

Hozgits — piglike pigherders

Lizardmen — reptile-like creatures; it is unclear whether they should be considered Beast or Humanoid

Lyn of Carolle — philosopher and scientist of The Far Reaches, 756-?

Moonriders — a Humanoid tribe learned in Magic

Mountains of Demeley — mountains in northwest Osgorth extending from the coast of the Black Sea to west of Lake Sinclair. Home of the Centaurs

Namore — City in The Far Reaches

Nether Villages — villages midway between the realms of Northwold and The Far Reaches at the base of the Montmery Mountains

Noran — ruler of Northwold from 760 until the downfall of the realm in approximately 795 O.R. (9th King of Northwold)

Northwold — kingdom located in the treeless rolling plains of northern Osgorth

O.R. — "Osgorthian Reckoning" of the passing of andromedes (years) The Osgorthian calendar was devised by an eccentric Northwold nobleman.

Ormolu — "the Sorceror", rumored to be immortal; also the tribe that follows the precepts of Ormolu

Osgorthian Treaty of Fellowship — 775 O.R., an agreement granting all rights of equality to Beasts

Peredel — Winter month

Planting Cycle — season of Spring on Osgorth

Sheltered Cities — a group of walled cities east of Lake Sinclair under the protection of the Knights of Northwold

Sir Tandy — "the Factual", one of the Knights of Northwold, author of the six volume work **Rambling Opinions**

Tome Towers — structures which house the scholarly works and history of Osgorth

Treachery of Ormolu — the resignation of Ormolu as Court Sorceror of The Far Reaches in 784 O.R.

Unicorn — horselike animals with a spiraled horn growing from the middle of the forehead; found in the Heywood Forest

Valkyries — warlike women mounted on Unicorns

Waldemar — "the Mighty", 737-?; one of the Knights of Northwold; retired to become statesman and orator

Zorg — one of the Beast races; primitives

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